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VI.—JULIUS OR “JULIUS”: A NOTE ON VERG.  
AEN. I. 286 SEQ.

Nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar,	286
Imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris,	
Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo.	
Hunc tu olim caelo, spoliis Orientis onustum,	
Accipies securâ; vocabitur hic quoque votis.	
Aspera tum positis mitescent saecula bellis;	291
Cana Fides, et Vesta, Remo cum fratre Quirinus,	
Iura dabunt; dirae ferro et compagibus artis	
Claudentur Belli portae; etc.	

Commentators in the early editions of the *Aeneid* assumed, for the plain reason that this passage names Julius, that it refers to the Julius Caesar whom we regularly know by that name, as the ancients did. Ever since the edition of Heyne, however, editors have generally explained the reference as wholly to Augustus, and this is the view of school-room orthodoxy at the present time. Nevertheless it seems on some accounts — in a political year — as if the recall might suitably be applied to this bit of commentary. In spite of the temerity of venturing to question a long-accepted and authoritative interpretation of so familiar a text, and in spite of the professional charm of the less obvious of possible explanations, it still seems as if the grounds of the received interpretation might usefully be subjected to doubt, as possibly they have not been by all the editors who have repeated the now traditional comment that the passage refers throughout — with an altogether exceptional use of the name Iulius<sup>1</sup> — to C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus.

There is of course no doubt that the lines 291 seq. belong to Augustus. As to the earlier ones, Heyne gives three reasons for concluding that Augustus is meant throughout the passage, rather than Divus Iulius:

“Nec terrarum imperium (v. 287) facile Caesari tribuitur, neque is spoliis Orientis onustus, neque ab eo pax restituta (v. 294). Contra Augusto illa ubique obvia”.

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen (*Staatsr.* II<sup>3</sup>, p. 768) notes the fact that even from about the beginning of the fourth decade B. C. — during the Triumvirate — Octavianus discontinued the use of the names *C. Julius* in favor of *Imp. Caesar*.

Of these, it is not easy to see why the universal imperium could not be ascribed to Julius Caesar, if not in the strictly legal sense, at least in a practical and complimentary sense, as a summing up of the world-wide conquests which were wonderingly enumerated not only by the great Julius's own contemporaries, but also by a writer like Ovid when the career of Augustus himself was far advanced; indeed, considering the completeness with which Augustus originally owed his place and power to his great adoptive father, to the fact that it was Julius who had created the public occasion for connecting the Julian gens with the name of Iulus at all, it would have been very strange if Julius had not been mentioned in this connection in just about this way. As James Henry in his *Aeneidea*<sup>1</sup> aptly remarked: "In a poem written for the glorification of Augustus . . . all mention of Augustus's uncle and immediate predecessor, the deified founder of the Julian race and dynasty, could no more have been omitted than could in these days be omitted in a poem in honor of the third Napoleon all mention of the third Napoleon's uncle and predecessor." In particular, the third of the three great victories by which Julius Caesar assured his final supremacy over his rivals in the empire was won at Munda in Spain; so there is an especial neatness in the *Imperium Oceano . . . terminet*, as applied to him.

The third of Heyne's three objections to the natural application of these verses, that the restoration of peace was by Augustus, not Julius, is no difficulty at all, but the contrary, as we shall see.

The second is more serious. *Spoliis Orientis onustum* fits the case of Julius somewhat less aptly than that of Augustus Caesar, certainly if one explains it, with Servius, as a reference to the brief campaign against Pharnaces, though even in that the famous epigrammatic brevity of the announcement of victory would give some point to the allusion. But there is perhaps another significance in the phrase. It does not refer to Caesar's return to Rome but to his reception in heaven. At about the time when Virgil was writing, presumably, this passage, Augustus was building the temple of the Divine Julius, and using for that purpose, it would appear, precisely some of the spoils which he had brought from the East upon his return in the year 29. He dedicated the temple in August of that year. We are specifically told of the beaks of the Egyptian war vessels which were mounted on the base of the temple,<sup>2</sup> and that Augustus consecrated *Dona*

<sup>1</sup> London, 1873, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> Dio Cas. LI. 19; etc.

*ex manibiis in Capitolio et in aede divi Iuli et in aede Apollinis et in aede Vestae et in templo Martis Ultoris . . . quae mihi constiterunt HS circiter milliensi*<sup>1</sup>; and Strabo<sup>2</sup> and Pliny<sup>3</sup> mention in particular as having been dedicated by Augustus in the temple of Divus Iulius the Venus Anadyomene of Apelles (from Cos), τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ ἀναθέντος τῷ πατρὶ τὴν ἀρχηγέτω τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ.

The various honors which were done by Augustus to the memory of Julius were of course prominent in people's minds; not only the temple of Divus Iulius but also that of Mars Ultor and the Basilica Iulia and the Curia Iulia, to say nothing of the elaborate obsequies and the popular interpretation of the famous comet<sup>4</sup> (Cf. *famam qui terminet astris*) had served to keep prominently in mind the thought of the Divine Julius, in whose divinity Augustus took so obvious an interest that it was the most natural thing in the world for the courtly poet to refer to this glorified restorer of the line of Iulus.

Certainly not without some interest in this connection, as illustrating at least the popular inclination to connect the name of Iulus with that of the great Dictator, is the story, however apocryphal it may be, related by Suetonius,<sup>5</sup> of the discovery at Capua of a bronze tablet on the tomb in which Capys the founder of Capua was said to have been buried. This discovery, he says, was a few months before Caesar's assassination, *cum in colonia Capua deducti lege Iulia coloni ad exstruendas villas vetustissima sepulchra disicerent, idque eo studiosius facerent, quod aliquantum vasculorum operis antiqui scrutantes reperiabant*. The *tabula aenea*, he says, was *conscripta litteris verbisque Graecis hac sententia*, "*Quandoque ossa Capyis detecta essent, fore ut Iulo prognatus manu consanguineorum necaretur magnisque mox Italiae cladibus vindicaretur*." Suetonius cites Cornelius Balbus as authority for his account.

There is even a possible relevancy in the fact, considering that Virgil mentions Julius next after Romulus in this prophecy of the Julian line, that the right of asylum which the senate granted to the sanctuary of the Divine Julius is especially remarked by Dio to have been unexampled in the case of any god since the time of Romulus: ἀπηγόρευσαν δὲ μηδένα εἰς τὸ ἱρὸν αὐτοῦ καταφυγόντα ἐπ'

<sup>1</sup> *Res Gestae*, IV. 23 seq.; cf. Dio, I. I. 22. <sup>2</sup> XIV. 2. 19. <sup>3</sup> *N. H.* XXXV. 91.

<sup>4</sup> Verg. *Ecl.* IX. 47; Suet. *Div. Iul.* 88; Dio. *Cas.* XLV. 7; etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Div. Iul.* 81.

ἀδεία μήτε ἀνδρηλατεῖσθαι, μήτε συλᾶσθαι ὅπερ οὐδενὶ οὐδὲ τῶν θεῶν, πλὴν τῶν ἐπὶ τοῦ Ῥωμύλου γενομένων, ἐδεδώκεσαν.<sup>1</sup>

But all of Virgil's passage, however, was of course intended to gratify the existing head of the Julian house. Early in this same year 29 B. C. Augustus had closed the doors of the temple of Janus, an enormously popular act which Heyne (as his third objection: *neque ab eo pax restituta*) with a rather inept superfluity says did not belong to Julius. For Heyne and the other commentators following his lead seem to overlook the evident meaning of *tum* in this place. It is not 'then, at the same time', but 'then, next afterward'. Julius, the Caesar whose name especially recalls that of the great Iulus and in whose deification as the founder or restorer of the Julian line Octavianus is so intimately concerned, shall be received in heaven glorified with the spoils of the East: he also shall be called upon in prayer. And then, afterward, he having gone to heaven and his apotheosis being a matter of official recognition and popular enthusiasm, and Augustus being now in power, the warlike age shall grow peaceful and the grim gates of war shall be closed. The meaning seems too obvious to justify a question.

The passage in the sixth book of the Aeneid beginning (vs. 791) *Hic vir, hic est*, offers no real inconsistency with this view. Ovid's famous account of the deification of Julius Caesar<sup>2</sup> is written in the very tone and manner that would be natural to Ovid writing a few years later in Augustus's principate with Virgil's present lines in mind with their natural interpretation. As in the Virgilian lines, Julius Caesar is made by Ovid the initial theme of his laudation, and presently (vs. 750 seq.) Ovid continues to the effect that none of Caesar's achievements is greater than his having been the father of Augustus<sup>3</sup>; and like Virgil he concludes the passage with a glorification of the latter. It would appear that commentators on the present passage of the Aeneid have been misled by an overemphasis upon one theory of the meaning of the words *spoliis Orientis onustum*, which even if it be correct is not necessarily conclusive, in spite of the admitted fact that the Augustan age was fond of expatiating upon Augustus's eastern conquests, and have neglected the natural conclusion that the two parts of the passage do not refer to the same person.

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<sup>1</sup> Dio. XLVII. 19. Met. XV. 745-870. <sup>2</sup> Note especially vss. 760, 761.